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## CHAPTER 1

# OVERVIEW OF THE SBCT INFANTRY BATTALION RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON

*The Stryker brigade combat team (SBCT) infantry battalion's primary mission is to close with and destroy the enemy during full-spectrum operations through close, violent combat. The SBCT infantry battalion is capable of accomplishing all missions historically identified with the infantry and is organized and equipped to conduct operations in restricted and urban terrain. The battalion, as part of the SBCT, deploys rapidly, executes early-entry operations, and conducts effective combat operations immediately upon arrival to prevent, contain, stabilize, or resolve a conflict*

*The infantry battalion reconnaissance platoon is comprised of handpicked, highly motivated, expert infantry soldiers and serves as the forward "EYES AND EARS" for the battalion commander. The primary mission of the reconnaissance platoon is to conduct reconnaissance and surveillance in support of the battalion commander's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operation to determine enemy composition and disposition along named areas of interest. The commander and his staff use this information during the planning and execution of combat operations.*

### Section I. CAPABILITIES, LIMITATIONS, ORGANIZATION, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The mission of the infantry is to close with the enemy by means of fire and movement to defeat him, capture him, or repel his assault by fire, close combat, or counterattack. The reconnaissance platoon is organized, equipped, and trained to conduct reconnaissance, surveillance, and limited security missions for its parent battalion. The platoon's primary mission is to provide battlefield information and assist in the tactical control, movement, and positioning of the battalion's companies and platoons. Its organization enables the platoon to conduct both mounted and dismounted reconnaissance tasks simultaneously. It provides the battalion commander with the ability to reconnoiter throughout his battalion's battle space. To ensure understanding, the following definitions apply:

- Reconnaissance is a mission undertaken to obtain, by visual observation or other detection methods, information about the activities and resources of an enemy or potential enemy or to secure data concerning the meteorological, hydrographic, or geographic characteristics of a particular area.
- Security operations are designed to provide reaction time, maneuver space, and protection to the main body.

#### 1-1. CAPABILITIES

The reconnaissance platoon's vehicles and design parameters provide it with the ability to maintain "eyes on" four to six named areas of interest (NAIs). The SBCT infantry battalion reconnaissance platoon can also accomplish the following:

- Conduct zone, area, and route reconnaissance.
- Conduct limited screening and area security operations to the battalion's front, flank, or rear.
- Conduct linkup and liaison.
- Guide maneuver forces.
- Conduct terminal guidance for helicopter operation.
- Mark helicopter landing and pickup zones.
- Perform quartering party duties.
- Provide traffic control.
- Conduct limited obstacle construction and reduction.
- Participate in air assault operations.
- Conduct reconnaissance handover between elements of the cavalry squadron (reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition [RSTA]) and itself.

a. **Survivability.** The increased mobility and protection afforded by the reconnaissance vehicle (RV) and the ability of the vehicle to protect the infantrymen from small-arms fire and fragmentation before dismounting increases the platoon's survivability. In addition, the employment of the Force XXI battle command brigade and below (FBCB2) system significantly enhances the platoon's survivability by increasing its ability to communicate and receive tactical information and command and control (C2). (See sub-paragraph c, for more information on FBCB2.)

b. **Command, Control, and Communications.** The RVs for both the reconnaissance platoon leader and platoon sergeant are equipped with FBCB2 systems that tie those vehicles and leaders to the C2 hierarchy of the infantry companies, battalions, and brigade. Features that support command, control, and communications (C3) are command and control software, navigational software, and digital communications capabilities.

c. **Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below.** FBCB2 is a network of computers, global positioning equipment, and communication systems that provide on-the-move, real-time command and control information to tactical combat arms, combat support (CS), and combat service support (CSS) soldiers and leaders. FBCB2 is designed for units performing missions at the tactical level (brigade to individual fighting platform). It provides a common database with automated positional information and current tactical battlefield geometry for friendly and known or suspected enemy forces. Collectively, the FBCB2 systems generate the common operational picture (COP). FBCB2 displays relevant information, showing the user his location, the location of other friendly forces, observed or templated enemy locations, and all known obstacles. The system also provides preformatted, standardized reports that allow leaders to rapidly disseminate graphic overlays and written fragmentary orders (FRAGOs). The command receives data "pushed" from all other battlefield systems to maintain real-time battle information. The commander must organize and interpret the information received via FBCB2 to determine its value in relation to the current situation.

**NOTE:** A COP is an operational picture tailored to the user's requirements, based on common data and information (friendly and enemy) shared by more than one unit.

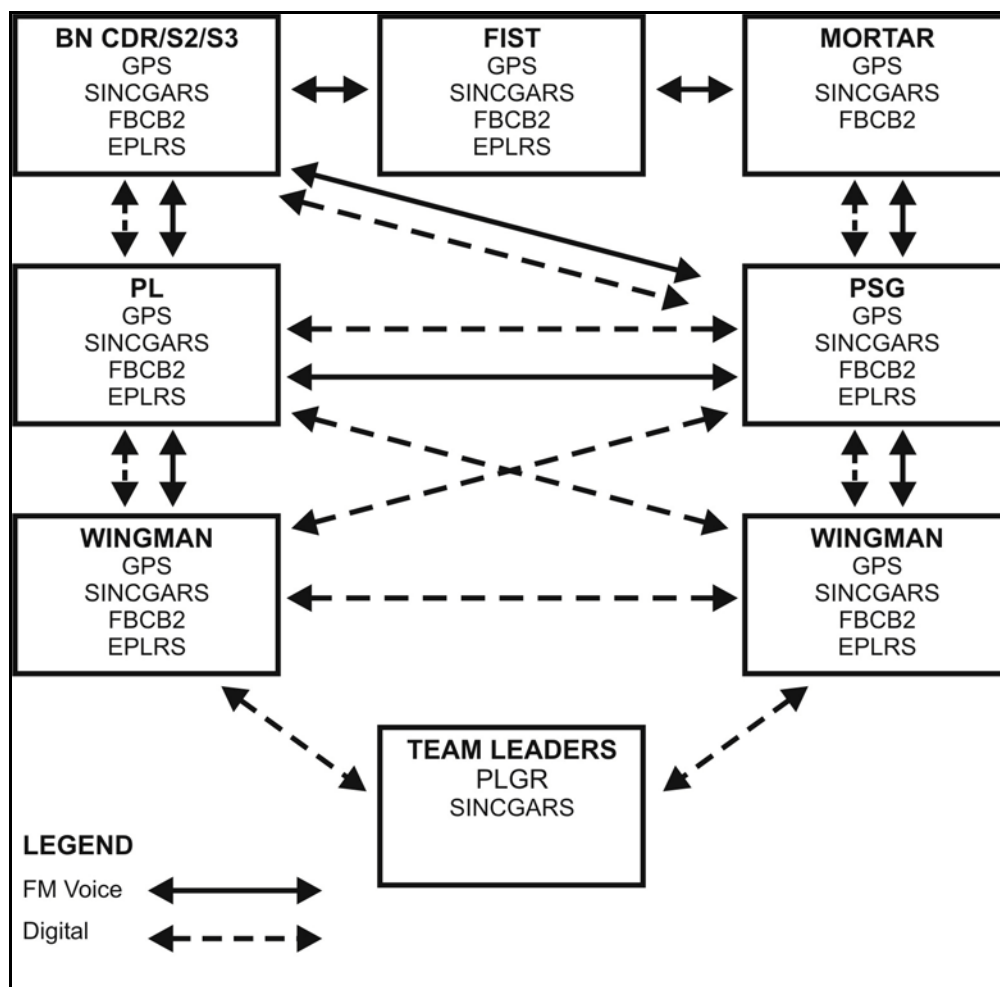
(1) ***FBCB2 Architecture.*** Figure 1-1, page 1-4, depicts the FBCB2 architecture. Each vehicle in the platoon is equipped with the three basic components of the FBCB2 system.

(a) The global positioning system (GPS) provides precise location and date/time for reporting real-time friendly locations and for generating laser designated map spots for reporting purposes.

(b) The single-channel ground and airborne radio system (SINCGARS) provides a secure means of transmitting (both voice and digital) between vehicles in the platoon. In addition to the SINCGARS, platoon vehicles also are equipped with the enhanced position location and reporting system (EPLRS). The EPLRS provides a secure digital connection and serves as a router, efficiently sending message traffic internally within the platoon and out to the company and fire support nets. This routing capability ensures that information is passed even if the chain of command is disrupted by physical separation on the battlefield, casualties, or mechanical failures.

(c) The FBCB2 terminal provides the monitor, keyboard, mouse, and computing functions that allow the crew to access the system. These systems form the lower tactical Internet (TI).

(d) The upper TI consists of a variety of tactical computer systems and communications equipment located primarily at the battalion level and higher. The most important of these are the maneuver control system (MCS), the all source analysis system (ASAS), the advanced field artillery tactical data system (AFATDS), and the combat service support control system (CSSCS). These systems draw upon the reports and positional data passed on from the lower TI to provide the COP at higher command levels. In turn, these systems can push information such as location of adjacent units, known and templated enemy positions, graphics, and operations orders (OPORDs), down to the FBCB2 users.



**Figure 1-1. FBCB2 architecture.**

(2) **FBCB2 Capabilities.** The FBCB2 displays the current information on both friendly and enemy forces, delivering the common operational picture for the platoon. The following are capabilities of FBCB2.

(a) **Friendly Information.** The FBCB2 screen displays an icon for each friendly individual vehicle in the platoon. This provides the vehicle commander (VC) with a clear picture of where he is located in relation to the platoon. It provides the platoon leader with a picture of where he is operating in relation to the rifle companies. While the system functions automatically for vehicles equipped to operate on the TI, it does not provide locations to every friendly element on the battlefield. For example, the system does not automatically track dismounted elements operating at extended ranges from their RVs. In addition, it does not cover non-digitally equipped units or allied and or coalition forces that may be operating adjacent to the platoon. Icons representing these elements may be imported into FBCB2 based on frequency modulated (FM) radio reports, but they are not updated in real time. As a result, FBCB2 cannot be the sole instrument used to clear fires; it does not substitute for a leader's judgment in preventing fratricide.

(b) **Enemy Information.** FBCB2 creates the COP from both top-down and bottom-up feeds. The battalion S2 inputs enemy icons into the system based on spot reports

generated by the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and other information-gathering assets outside the battalion. Based on his intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB), the S2 augments these actual locations with templated positions in the form of a situation template (SITEMP).

(c) *Enemy Activity and Obstacles*. As the platoon conducts operations, it adds to the COP by sending spot reports of enemy activity and obstacles via FBCB2. When a VC sends a spot report, he automatically creates an icon representing the enemy on other FBCB2 systems in the platoon. The platoon leader evaluates the validity of the report, ensures its accuracy, and forwards the report to the other section and teams in the platoon and higher to battalion.

(d) *Enemy Location*. To keep the COP current, units must update spot reports concerning enemy locations that are represented by icons on the FBCB2. Updates must be sent whenever the enemy situation changes (enemy element moves or is destroyed). An icon will “fade” and eventually disappear from the FBCB2 screen as the icon’s information ages. The unit standing operating procedure (SOP) governs the icon “fade” rate.

(e) *Unreported Enemy*. Members of the platoon must remember that the COP provided by FBCB2 is only as good as the reports that the system receives. It will never give a 100-percent complete or accurate enemy picture. The platoon leader, section leaders, VCs, and team leaders must ensure that plans are adequate to detect enemy forces not yet reported by digital means.

d. **Standardized Reporting**. FBCB2 streamlines the reporting process by providing the platoon with the capability to send and receive preformatted, standardized reports (Figure 1-2, page 1-6).

(1) Standardized reports afford several tactical advantages:

- They help to ensure that all required information is included in a particular report or request.
- They reduce the chance of errors in transmission.
- They allow for the storage of messages for retrieval and reference.

FREE TEXT MESSAGE	REDCON ALERT
Check Fire	Situation Report (SITREP)
Call for Fire	Field Orders <sup>2</sup>
Observer Mission Updates <sup>1</sup>	Operations Plan
On-Call Fire Command	Fragmentary Order (FRAGO)
Message to Observer <sup>1</sup>	Warning Order (WARNO)
Fire SPT COORD Measures	Minefield Laying
End of Mission/Surveillance	Overlay
Sequent Adjust	MOPP Alert
Observer Readiness Report	MEDEVAC Report
Airborne Fire Mission	Logistics Report
Spot Report	Personnel Report
Engagement Report	Supply Point Status
Contact Report	Task Management
Land Route Report	LOG Task Order
Obstacle Report	LOG Call for Support
Bridge Report	LOG Task Status
Position Report	LOG Task Sync
NBC 1 Report	Execution Matrix
NBC 4 Report <sup>1</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> Commander's graphic intent (CGI)

<sup>2</sup> Receive Only

**Figure 1-2. Preformatted, standardized reports.**

(2) There continues to be a requirement for FM voice message traffic. For example, platoon leaders must still transmit contact reports to initiate battle drills and to cue VCs to reference their FBCB2 screens for updated information. Additionally, VCs may need to send FM voice descriptions of enemy locations, routes, or obstacles to clarify the situation. This is especially true in urban terrain where the FBCB2 cannot display the terrain in sufficient detail to assist leaders in making effective decisions.

e. **Combat Orders and Graphics.** FBCB2 greatly enhances the speed and precision of the orders process at platoon level. The system allows leaders to add or modify operational graphics during the planning process or during execution. This ensures that every element has the most current information to control movement and fires. In addition, platoon leaders can use free text messages to transmit OPORDs, FRAGOs, and situational updates over extended distances without the loss of time and information typical of FM voice communications. Like the standardized reports, orders and graphics can be stored for retrieval and reference. (For more information on reconnaissance platoon overlays, symbols, and graphics, see Appendix A.)

f. **Sustainability.** The reconnaissance platoon can operate for up to 72 hours on or off the RV. This is accomplished by prestocking the RV with Class I and Class V supplies as well as with potable water. The RV can operate for up to 16 hours daily and travel a minimum of 100 kilometers with Class III resupply. The CSS system in the parent battalion resupplies the RV as necessary.

g. **Mobility.** The driver's vision enhancer (thermal) and the driver's navigation display unit improve the driver's vision, thus allowing upgraded platoon mobility in total darkness, all weather conditions, and degraded visibility conditions. The RV precision navigation system (PNS) consists of an inertial navigation unit (INU), a GPS, and precision lightweight global positioning system receiver (PLGR).

(1) The PLGR provides the user with precise position coordinates with time and navigation capability under all conditions except when obstructions exist between the satellite and antenna. Users can enter map coordinates as waypoints. When the user selects a waypoint as a destination, the receiver can provide steering indications and azimuth and range information to the destination. The user can program a desired course to the waypoint and can indicate an offset distance from this course line. The user can also remove the PLGR from the vehicle and operate it in the handheld mode.

(2) The INU is a ring-laser, gyro-based navigation device. It is the primary navigation system and supplies position, velocity, attitude, angular rate, and acceleration (roll, pitch, and azimuth) to the turret processor unit. The GPS supplies the INU with initial position data.

(3) The components of the precision navigation system can operate in a combination of five modes:

- Integrated GPS/INU/vehicle motion sensor (VMS).
- GPS only (when the INU sensor fails).
- INU/VMS (when the GPS receiver fails to acquire satellite signal or is damaged).
- GPS/INU (when the VMS fails).
- INU only (if both the GPS receiver and the VMS are not available).

h. **Night-Vision Equipment.** Own-the-night (OTN) equipment advancements enhance command and control at night and improve the reconnaissance platoon's ability to conduct surveillance and acquire targets (Table 1-1, page 1-8). SBCT sections and platoons have infrared illuminators, improved nightsights, target acquisition devices, and signaling devices. (Refer to Appendix B for a detailed discussion of limited visibility operations.)

<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>CAPABILITIES</b>
<b>AN/PVS-14</b>	Provides observation out to 300 meters for man-sized targets and 500 meters for vehicle-sized targets.
<b>3X Magnifier</b>	Provides observation out to 600 meters for man-sized targets and 1,000 meters for vehicle-sized targets.
<b>Thermal Weapon Sight, Medium (M16, M249, M240)</b>	Maximum range 1,100 meters.
<b>Ground Commander's Pointer (GCP-1)</b>	Designate target from 0 to 8,000 meters (pinpoint mode); illuminate target 800 meters with 10-degree scan (area mode).
<b>AN/PAQ-4B/C</b>	600 meters maximum.
<b>Aim-1</b>	Zeroed out to the maximum range of 3,000 meters.
<b>Black Light</b>	12-hour duration; range varies with terrain.
<b>Infrared Trip Flare</b>	20-meter radius; emits minimal visible light.
<b>Phoenix</b>	12-hour duration; range varies with terrain.
<b>Javelin CLU Thermal Weapon Sight</b>	Range in excess of 3,000 meters.

**Table 1-1. Night vision equipment capabilities.**

(1) The reconnaissance teams use infrared light from infrared parachute flares or infrared handheld flares to illuminate targets without the enemy's knowledge. These advancements allow the teams to see more of the battlefield and aid in target acquisition, indirect fire adjustment, and increased survivability.

(2) The key infrared target designator is the ground commander's pointer (GCP-1). Platoon and squad leaders use the GCP-1 to designate targets to cue observers for target acquisition and assist in reconnaissance handover.

(3) The reconnaissance teams are equipped with the infrared laser designators for increased target acquisition.

(4) Individual soldiers are equipped with an AN/PAQ-4B/C laser aiming light that emits a pulsating infrared laser on the desired target at the point of aim. The AN/PAQ-4B/C mounts on the M16, M4, M203, and M249. Soldiers use the laser with night-vision goggles (NVGs) to improve the probability of hitting the target during darkness.

(5) Platoon members also have improved night-vision devices. Each soldier is equipped with AN/PVS-14 night-vision goggles with 3X magnification.

## **1-2. LIMITATIONS**

The reconnaissance platoon is best suited to conducting operations as part of a larger combined-arms force. Reconnaissance elements in general have limitations that must be considered when planning for employment. Limitations of the reconnaissance platoon include the following:

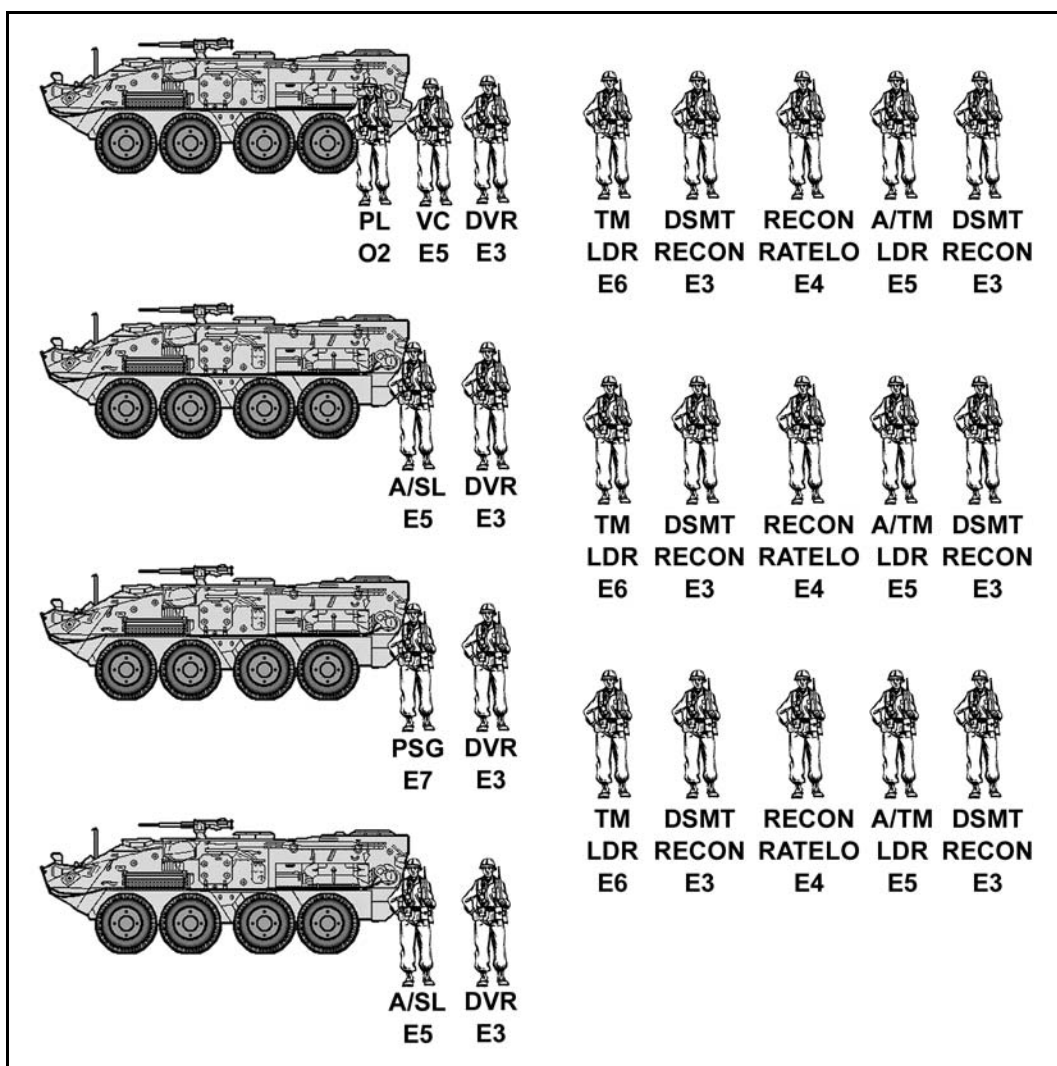
- The reconnaissance platoon is dependent on its parent unit for CS and CSS.
- During screening operations, reconnaissance platoons are limited in their ability to destroy or repel enemy reconnaissance units.



- The platoon can effectively conduct route reconnaissance of only two separate company mobility corridors.
- The small size of the platoon limits its ability to conduct a detailed zone reconnaissance.
- Terrain, enemy situation, and time available also affect the size of the zone the reconnaissance platoon can reconnoiter.
- The reconnaissance platoon's communications equipment limits how far from the main body it can operate. With its organic equipment, the platoon operates on two nets--the battalion operations and intelligence net and the platoon net.
- The reconnaissance platoon has limited obstacle construction abilities and carries only a limited load of demolitions.
- The reconnaissance platoon has very limited obstacle reduction capability; under most conditions, it can breach only point obstacles.
- Platoon RVs are vulnerable to enemy antiarmor fires.

### **1-3. ORGANIZATION**

The reconnaissance platoon is organized into two sections of two RVs each and three 5-man reconnaissance teams (Figure 1-3, page 1-10). One section is "heavy" and transports two reconnaissance teams. The other "light" section transports one reconnaissance team and the platoon leader. The reconnaissance platoon rarely uses a headquarters element during tactical operations; it relies instead on the leaders of its sections or teams as described in the following discussion.

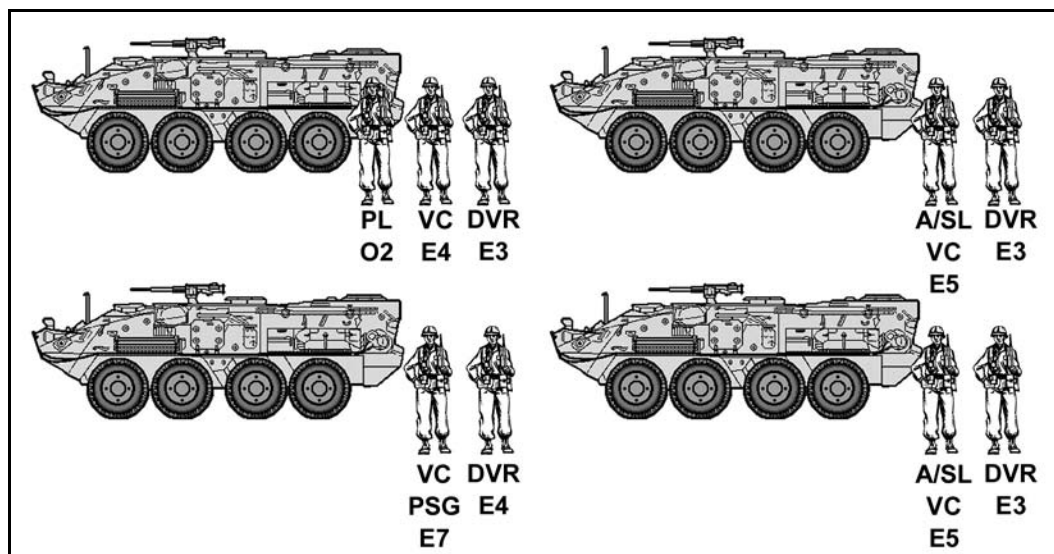


**Figure 1-3. Reconnaissance platoon organization.**

a. **Platoon Headquarters.** The platoon headquarters element provides C2 to the platoon and consists of the platoon leader (PL), platoon sergeant (PSG), and their respective vehicle crews. The platoon may be augmented with a medic.

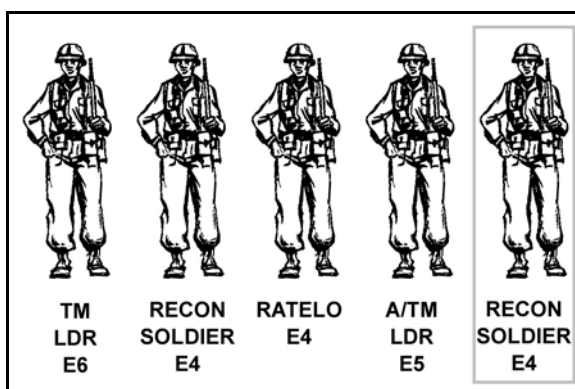
b. **Mounted Element.** The reconnaissance platoon is equipped with four RVs that provide the reconnaissance teams with rapid, protected tactical and operational mobility to critical locations on the battlefield. The RV is a fully mobile system capable of operating in conjunction with infantry and other elements of the combined arms team. Each RV has a crew of two (commander and driver) that operates the vehicle. When conducting mounted movement or reconnaissance, the PL and PSG are included in the mounted element and serve as VCs and the reconnaissance section leaders (Figure 1-4). The crew provides critical support to the platoon by operating and maintaining the RVs and properly employing them on the battlefield to ensure protected delivery of the reconnaissance teams to their dismount point. Once the reconnaissance teams have dismounted the carriers, the vehicle crew may employ local self-defense armament to

defeat “thin-skinned” enemy vehicles (trucks or lightly armored vehicles) or dismounted infantry.



**Figure 1-4. Mounted element.**

c. **Dismounted Element.** The dismounted element. consists of the platoon headquarters and the three reconnaissance teams. The five-man reconnaissance team (Figure 1-5) is the foundation of the reconnaissance and surveillance forces and is employed to conduct reconnaissance and surveillance missions in support of the battalion commander’s information-gathering effort. The dismounted element may be required to fight as infantrymen. To support the fight, the platoon is equipped with four M240 machine guns which may be task-organized to the dismounted elements. The element must be prepared to defeat enemy forces, secure key or decisive terrain, deprive the enemy of resources, deceive and divert the enemy, hold the enemy in position, or disrupt an enemy attack.



**Figure 1-5. Dismounted reconnaissance teams.**

#### **1-4. RECONNAISSANCE SECTIONS AND TEAMS**

The reconnaissance section is normally employed as the platoon's basic tactical maneuver organization. Each section consists of a section leader (either the PL or the PSG), team leaders, reconnaissance team(s), and two crews, each of which mans a vehicle. The assistant section leader (A/SL) assists with command and control of the section. For maneuver purposes, the platoon may also be task-organized into elements known as reconnaissance teams (a team is normally a single vehicle and its crew). The reconnaissance sections are capable of conducting mounted and dismounted reconnaissance operations at the same time. The section leader reports critical intelligence information obtained by his section to the reconnaissance platoon leader or the battalion tactical operations center (TOC). The mounted element of each section is capable of conducting traditional mounted reconnaissance missions (area, route, and zone). The three dismounted reconnaissance teams are capable of conducting independent, traditional dismounted reconnaissance missions. These include conducting long-range surveillance of key areas of interest, marking landing and pickup zones, providing terminal guidance for helicopter operations, and providing guides for the conduct of dismounted infiltration operations.

#### **1-5. DISMOUNTED ORGANIZATIONS**

The basic element within the reconnaissance platoon is the dismounted team. Every dismounted team consists of a reconnaissance element and a control and security element. The purpose of the reconnaissance element is to obtain data for information requirements. The control and security element's primary responsibility is to protect the reconnaissance element. The control and security element may also be a reconnaissance element and have both reconnaissance and security responsibilities, or it may alternate responsibilities with the other element. Regardless of other roles the control and security element plays, its primary objective is to protect the reconnaissance element. A two-man element is the smallest element within the reconnaissance platoon. The following paragraphs describe possible dismounted organizations. Each type of organization can perform reconnaissance tasks, security tasks, observation post (OP) and or surveillance tasks, liaison, or a combination of any of these tasks. Within each team there is always an element designated as control and security. The platoon's vehicle(s) may be the control and security element for the reconnaissance element.

a. **Dismounted Team Organization.** The five-man dismounted team is the optimal dismounted configuration. Each team has a single RV and is led by an experienced noncommissioned officer (staff sergeant or higher).

b. **Dismounted Section Organization.** The dismounted section combines the strength of one or two dismounted teams. A platoon leader, PSG, or staff sergeant leads this section. The section is large enough to have a team capable of reacting to contact as part of its control and security element.

c. **Dismounted Platoon Organization.** The dismounted platoon organization is appropriate when the threat is high or vehicular movement is impossible. Infiltration, for example, may require the platoon to conduct a dismounted tactical movement. The platoon leader or platoon sergeant leads the dismounted platoon.

## 1-6. MOUNTED ORGANIZATIONS.

When mounted, the reconnaissance platoon normally operates in one of three organizations: as three teams with one vehicle in each team and the platoon leader's vehicle serving as C2; as two sections with two vehicles in each section; or as a four-vehicle platoon with each having an independent mission.

a. **Three-Team Organization.** The three-team organization is used when the anticipated threat is low to medium. The key to this organization rests in ensuring that adjacent vehicles mutually support each other. If mutual support is not possible because of terrain or other mission constraints, vehicles must have the ability to maneuver and support other adjacent platoon elements. This organization also allows the platoon leader to provide C2 for the platoon and direct fire support for any of the other three vehicles in his platoon. This organization does not provide the reconnaissance platoon with overwatch capability, thus leaving elements vulnerable to enemy contact.

b. **Two-Section Organization.** The platoon uses the two-section organization when it needs increased security, when it can cover the area of operations efficiently with only two elements, or when the enemy situation is unknown. This type of organization limits the amount of terrain the platoon can cover and decreases the speed with which the platoon can perform its tasks. On the other hand, it increases internal section security by providing mutually supporting fires. It also gives the platoon leader and the PSG greater flexibility in performing C2 and CSS requirements.

c. **Four-Vehicle Organization.** The four-vehicle organization is the most difficult to control. The platoon leader employs this organization when he must have four separate information sources on-going at the same time requiring each of the reconnaissance platoon's four vehicles and associated crews to be in separate locations or when executing specific surveillance missions directed by battalion. The platoon should use this organization when the likelihood of enemy contact is low or the enemy situation is known. The platoon may also implement this formation during short-duration security missions to allow for depth in the platoon's sector.

## 1-7. RESPONSIBILITIES

The reconnaissance platoon leader and the platoon's noncommissioned officers (NCOs) must be experts in the use of the platoon's organic crew-served weapons, indirect fires, land navigation, supporting direct and indirect fires, obstacles, communications, reconnaissance, surveillance, information collection, liaison, and security techniques. They must be familiar with infantry, mortar, and combined arms tactics and be able to react to rapidly changing situations. They must also know how to employ CS assets that are attached to the platoon. Because of the many missions the platoon must perform, the reconnaissance platoon leader and PSG must be proficient in all collective and individual infantry tasks and all the tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) for reconnaissance and surveillance. They must also be familiar with the capabilities, limitations, and deployment of ground sensors.

a. **Platoon Leader.** The platoon leader is responsible for the tactical employment, collective training, administration, personnel management, and logistics of the platoon. He must know his soldiers and how to employ the platoon and its weapons. He is personally responsible for positioning and employing all assigned or attached weapons. The platoon leader--

- Leads the platoon in supporting the battalion missions. He bases his actions on the missions the battalion commander assigns to him and the battalion commanders' concepts.
- Informs his commander of his actions when operating without orders.
- Plans operations with the help of the platoon sergeant, section leaders, team leaders, and other key personnel.
- Stays abreast of the situation and goes where needed to supervise, issue FRAGOs, and accomplish the mission.
- Requests necessary support from the battalion for his platoon to perform its mission.
- Provides guidance to the platoon sergeant in planning and coordinating the platoon's CSS effort.
- During planning, receives on-hand status reports from the platoon sergeant, section leaders, and team leaders.
- Reviews platoon requirements based on the tactical plan.
- During execution, supervises the platoon sergeant and section leaders.
- Develops the fire support plan with the platoon sergeant, section leaders, and team leaders.
- Coordinates the obstacle plan.
- Analyzes tactical situations, disseminates information, and employs the full capabilities of his platoon's equipment to accomplish the mission.
- Manages the C3 information.
- Ensures subordinates follow database protection procedures to prevent the compromise of digital information.
- Ensures that situation reports (SITREPs) are accurate and are forwarded to the commander and staff as applicable.
- Analyzes and then disseminates pertinent tactical friendly and enemy updates to his subordinates.
- During limited visibility, employs all available OTN assets to designate targets for the direct- and indirect-fire weapons and for situation updates.
- As a section leader, keeps his crew and wingman informed.

b. **Platoon Sergeant.** The platoon sergeant is the senior NCO in the platoon and second in command. He assists and advises the platoon leader and leads the platoon in the platoon leader's absence. He supervises the platoon's administration, logistics, and maintenance. The PSG is responsible for individual training. He advises the platoon leader on appointments, promotions and reductions, assignments, and discipline of NCOs and enlisted soldiers in the platoon. He is a tactical expert in platoon operations to include maneuver of the platoon and employment of all weapons. The platoon sergeant--

- Controls the mounted element when the platoon leader dismounts or dismounts with the platoon when it is conducting ground operations independent of its organic vehicles or when it is necessary to command and control the platoon (mission dependent). The platoon sergeant is a fighter by trade and should be considered in the tactical plan as either dismounted or maneuvering the mounted element.
- Serves as VC and section leader when the platoon is mounted.

- Receives team and section leaders' administrative, logistical, and maintenance reports and requests for rations, water, fuel, and ammunition. Coordinates with the battalion's headquarters and headquarters company's (HHC) first sergeant or executive officer (XO) to request resupply.
- Directs the platoon medic and platoon aid and litter teams in moving casualties during mounted or dismounted operations.
- Maintains platoon strength information, consolidates and forwards the platoon's casualty reports, and receives and orients replacements.
- Monitors the morale, discipline, and health of platoon members.
- Takes charge of task-organized elements in the platoon during tactical operations. This can include, but is not limited to, quartering parties, support elements in raids, combat patrols, and security patrols.
- Ensures ammunition and supplies are properly distributed after consolidation on the objective and during reorganization.
- Controls digital reports while the platoon is in contact to allow the platoon leader to maneuver the teams.
- Ensures the platoon leader is updated on appropriate reports and forwards those needed by higher headquarters.
- Collects, prepares, and forwards logistical status updates and requests to the battalion's HHC.
- As the leader of Section B, keeps his crew and wingman informed and directs fire and maneuver of his section.
- Ensures maintenance of all equipment.
- Ensures precombat inspections are conducted.

c. **Reconnaissance Section Leader and Team Leader.** The section leader and team leader are responsible for all that the section or team does or fails to do. They are tactical leaders and lead by example. The reconnaissance section leader and team leader--

- Are experts in dismounted patrols, employment of assets, reconnaissance, surveillance, and establishment of OPs.
- Control the maneuver of their section or team.
- Brief operations orders to the section or team.
- Train their section or team on individual and collective tasks required to sustain combat effectiveness.
- Manage the logistical and administrative needs of their section or team and request and issue ammunition, water, rations, and special equipment.
- Maintain accountability of soldiers and equipment.
- Complete casualty feeder reports and review casualty reports completed by section or team members.
- Direct maintenance of section or team weapons and equipment.
- Inspect the condition of soldiers' weapons, clothing, and equipment.
- Ensure material and supplies are distributed to the soldiers in the section or team.
- Keep the platoon leader and platoon sergeant informed of section or team supply status and requirements.

- Ensure supplies and equipment are internally cross-leveled within the section or team.
- Assist the VC and driver in maintaining the RV.
- Are responsible to the platoon leader for the training and discipline of their reconnaissance sections and teams.

d. **Reconnaissance Soldiers.** Soldiers within a reconnaissance platoon must be among the most tactically and technically proficient soldiers in the battalion. The reconnaissance platoon leader and PSG should be actively involved in the selection of these soldiers. Reconnaissance soldiers are physically fit and are experts in land navigation, communications, camouflage, surveillance, reconnaissance, target acquisition, employment of indirect fire and aviation assets, and survival. They understand the importance of the reconnaissance platoon's mission and what is required for successful accomplishment. Like their leaders, these soldiers use initiative and are intelligent, resourceful, dependable, and disciplined.

## **Section II. COMBAT POWER AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

This section discusses the elements of combat power and the considerations for employing and training the reconnaissance platoon.

### **1-8. COMBAT POWER**

The doctrine that guides infantry forces is based on the elements of combat power: maneuver, firepower, protection, leadership, and information.

a. **Maneuver.** Maneuver is the employment of forces on the battlefield through movement in combination with fire, or fire potential, to achieve a position of advantage with respect to the enemy in order to accomplish the mission. Infantry forces move to gain a position of advantage over the enemy and to hold that advantage. They maneuver to attack enemy flanks, rear areas, logistics points, and command posts. In the defense, they maneuver to counterattack a flank of the enemy attack. Maneuver, properly supported by fires, allows the infantry to close with the enemy and gain a decision in combat.

b. **Firepower.** Firepower is the amount of fire a position, unit, or weapons system can deliver. Firepower destroys or suppresses the enemy in his positions, deceives the enemy, and supports maneuver. Without effective supporting fires, the infantry cannot maneuver. Before attempting to maneuver, units must establish a base of fire.

(1) A base of fire is fire that is placed on an enemy force or position to reduce or eliminate the enemy's ability to interfere with friendly maneuver. A single weapon or group of weapon systems may provide a base of fire, but a base of fire generated by the weapons squad for the desired effect for the length of time necessary is most effective.

(2) Leaders must know how to control, mass, and combine fire with maneuver. They must identify the most critical targets quickly, direct fires onto them, and ensure the volume of fires is sufficient to keep the enemy from returning fire effectively and to keep the platoon from expending ammunition needlessly.

c. **Protection.** Protection is the preservation of the fighting potential of a force so it can be applied with maximum combat power at the decisive time and place. Platoons must never permit the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage. Platoons, sections, and



teams take active and passive measures to protect themselves from surprise, observation, detection, interference, espionage, sabotage, and annoyance. Protection includes two basic considerations: care of the soldier and his equipment and actions to counter enemy combat power.

(1) The first consideration involves sustainment techniques to maintain the platoon, sections, and teams as an effective fighting force. It includes keeping soldiers healthy to maintain morale through personal hygiene, physical conditioning, and rest plans. It also includes keeping equipment in good working condition and providing and protecting supplies.

(2) The second consideration involves security, dispersion, cover, camouflage, deception, and suppression of enemy weapons. Infantry units gain protection by digging fighting positions when stationary for any length of time; by skillful use of terrain while moving mounted; by dismounting the infantry to increase protection; and through overwatch, suppressive fires, and obscurity. The infantry always wants to set the time and place of battle. It must protect itself so it can do so with maximum combat power and with the important element of surprise.

d. **Leadership.** Military leadership is a process by which a soldier influences others to accomplish a mission. Leaders coordinate the other elements of combat power, and their competent and confident leadership results in effective unit action. The right leadership gives purpose, direction, and motivation in combat. Leaders must know their profession, their soldiers, and the tools of war. Only leaders who embody the warrior ethos can inspire and direct soldiers to do difficult tasks under dangerous and stressful conditions. Leadership is the most important element of combat power.

e. **Information.** Information enhances leadership and magnifies the effects of maneuver, firepower, and protection at decisive points. Infantry leaders have access to, and an understanding of, the broader tactical situation. This knowledge allows leaders to develop plans that better incorporate the elements of combat power during a decisive action. It also allows infantry leaders to make crucial decisions while a mission is ongoing to increase the opportunity for success.

## 1-9. CONSIDERATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT

The platoon leader must know the tactical strengths and weaknesses of the reconnaissance platoon and must determine the most effective and efficient method of employing the platoon. The reconnaissance platoon leader prepares, plans, and executes its assigned missions with the assistance of the battalion staff. Primary and specialty staff officers provide expertise for a particular battlefield operating system. The platoon leader also understands the brigade concept of the operation and how the battalion fits into the overall brigade concept. He identifies the brigade's task and purpose and his contribution to the battalion's fight. The platoon leader must clearly understand the brigade commander's intent from paragraph 3 of the brigade order. Additionally, the platoon leader identifies the task, purpose, and disposition for all adjacent maneuver elements under brigade control. The reconnaissance platoon leader should understand the specific functions of the battalion staff, ensure he understands the battalion commander's intent, and use the staff's expertise whenever possible. Finally, he must understand why the battalion commander gave his platoon a particular tactical task and how that task fits into the battalion's concept of the operation.

a. The reconnaissance platoon leader task-organizes his platoon to accomplish the mission based on the factors of mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, and civil considerations (METT-TC). Unlike most other combat arms platoons that maneuver together in formation, the reconnaissance platoon normally maneuvers as individual reconnaissance sections or teams, either mounted or dismounted, under the direction and control of the platoon leader. A reconnaissance section or team may consist of one or two vehicles plus any combat elements under its operational control (OPCON). Determining which organization best meets his mission requirements is one of the key decisions the platoon leader must make during his planning process.

b. Primary and specialty battalion staff officers provide expertise for particular battlefield operating systems:

(1) The battalion S2 provides information on the enemy and terrain.

(2) The S3 assigns the reconnaissance platoon its mission and then integrates its plan into that of the battalion.

(3) The fire support officer provides artillery and mortar fires to support the reconnaissance platoon's plan.

(4) The S4 maintains the platoon's logistical requirements.

(5) The signal officer maintains the battalion C2 and supplies the platoon's communications requirements.

c. The platoon leader coordinates with the battalion commander and staff when planning the platoon's mission. METT-TC factors determine whether to employ the platoon as an intact unit or in sections under platoon control.

d. Distance and mission duration are critical considerations affecting employment of the reconnaissance platoon away from the main body of its parent unit. Fire support, CSS, and communications requirements are also important factors when the reconnaissance platoon must conduct sustained operations beyond the immediate supporting range of the main body.

## **1-10. TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS**

Training is the cornerstone of success. The reconnaissance platoon must train for combat using appropriate training literature and doctrinal manuals that provide reconnaissance leaders with the TTP and principles required to conduct training properly. The leaders should refer to the applicable infantry collective tasks (contained in the Army training and evaluation program [ARTEP], Mission Training Plan) to find the specific conditions and standards for the techniques and procedures discussed in this manual. Training requires leaders to use their initiative and to make quick decisions. The training environment must be realistic and stressful, and it must challenge soldiers to master all infantry tasks (individual and collective). The training environment must constantly remind soldiers of their mission, of their heritage, and of the physical toughness and mental stress that is required of them. Platoon training also promotes the cohesion and determination of the platoon so that it continues to carry out the mission.